

Education and Workforce Development Cabinet
PUZZLED by Hearing Loss?
Communication covered from all
angles at the Kentucky State Fair

Press Release Friday, August 21, 2009

Date:

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FRANKFORT, Ky. – Free hearing screenings, technology demonstrations and presentations will highlight the PUZZLED by Hearing Loss? booth at the Kentucky State Fair and Exposition Center in Louisville now through Aug. 30.

Kentucky currently ranks third per capita nationally with more than 646,000 people who are identified as deaf or hard of hearing. More than 28 million Americans suffer from some degree of hearing loss, with that number expected to double by 2030.

The Kentucky Commission on the Deaf and Hard of Hearing (KCDHH) has partnered with the Heuser Hearing Institute to sponsor an exhibit on Main Street, located in the air-conditioned South Wing at the fair. Look for the black and green overhead banner that reads "PUZZLED by Hearing Loss?" to easily find the booth.

"I know this sounds cliché but it really takes a village. However, that village can also be confusing because a person might need many services and it's tiresome to try and contact several different groups before they finally get help," said Virginia L. Moore, executive director of the KCDHH. "This partnership merges these services into one convenient place so people can have easier access to what they need. What we're doing is bringing the village to the people."

Volunteers from several organizations, along with American Sign Language (ASL) interpreters, will be available to answer questions and distribute literature pertaining to hearing loss. Information on communication technologies and demonstrations of various assistive listening devices and telecommunications equipment are scheduled. Requests for applications will be taken at the KCDHH portion of the booth for anyone who needs equipment to assist with hearing on the telephone, a free service to Kentuckians.

The Heuser Hearing Institute will have licensed audiologists on site daily to conduct hearing screenings. Last year more than 2,000 people were screened for hearing loss during the state fair. Audiologists also use a video otoscope to give fair goers a live view of the ear's interior.

Ingrid Edwards, an audiologist at the Heuser Hearing Institute, said "In our noisy world, the majority of people over 18 have damage to their hearing. A hearing screening will determine if the damage is affecting their ability to communicate."

Hamilton Relay representatives will also provide information and demonstrations of technology used to access the relay service, which provides equitable access to telecommunications for deaf, hard of hearing and speech-impaired Kentuckians.

For the second year, fairgoers can learn about hearing loss and effective communication strategies through a series of daily presentations on the Blue Ribbon Stage. Live captioning will be provided by a certified CART reporter. Check the schedule for times.

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The Kentucky Commission on the Deaf and Hard of Hearing has spent over a quarter century providing effective and efficient leadership, education, advocacy and programs to eliminate barriers and to meet the social, economic, cultural and intellectual needs of deaf and hard of hearing Kentuckians.

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